

CONNECTION

LIBRARY OF CALIFORNIA

ISSUE NUMBER 34
April 2003

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Universal Access and Libris DESIGN

By **Linda Demmers**
Library Consulting

If you are trying to ensure that your library is adequately available to people with disabilities, you might want to check out Libris DESIGN. Libris DESIGN, a library facility planning information system that includes free downloadable software on the Libris DESIGN website (www.librisdesign.org), also provides a wealth of information for library planners. Funding for the development of Libris DESIGN has been provided by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

Now in its sixth year of development, the software was conceived by Richard Hall of the California State Library (CSL) who developed the database in collaboration with SAIC, Inc., a software firm in San Diego. Over 300 people have been trained in the use of Libris DESIGN, and the user mailing list now numbers 225 active users. Although not a requirement for the *California Reading and Literacy*

Improvement and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2000 application process, over 40 percent of the building programs submitted in the first cycle were produced using Libris DESIGN.



The basic premise of Libris DESIGN is to promote good library planning and design. Good library design encompasses all the requirements of universal design or access for people with disabilities. Users of the Libris DESIGN software can access any of the four expert models for serving persons with disabilities included in the database and review 18 space details (functional criteria) about any one of 400 specific spaces. These include requirements on topics such as acoustics, security, lighting, and finish materials. For example, users can verify the aisle width and shelving height requirements for current periodicals to ensure that they are accessible to those in wheelchairs. Other accessibility requirements include *Signage*, *Telecommunications*, and *Electrical*.

Please see Libris DESIGN, page 2



Mervyn's and libraries team up for *The Big Blue Book Club*

By Sarah Dalton
Connection Editor

While kids and their families bustle through the racks at Mervyn's through May 31, 2003, an alluring promotion, complete with prizes, will catch their eyes. Blanketing the kid's departments at all Mervyn's California locations are cartoonish posters and fliers selling the *Big Blue Book Club*, a reading incentive program that's the brainchild of the private corporation and California's public libraries.

To join the *Club*, children at Mervyn's pick-up kid-friendly *Big Blue Passports* inviting them to "Go Places. Read." Children then bring their Mervyn's *Passport* to their local libraries to find and read six books. When the child's librarian signs the *Passport*, the children take it back to Mervyn's for prizes.

Though the larger program goal is to rocket a child into the imaginative world of reading, the actual "place" the Passport takes a child, of course, is his or her local library.

It's a terrific way to promote California's libraries, and librarians have had a lot to do with it.

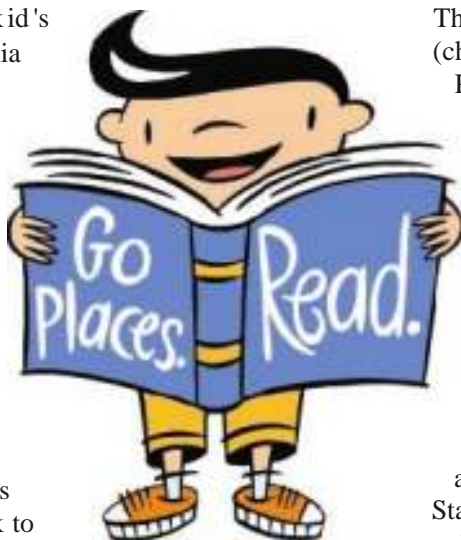
The California State Library, the California Library Association and Mervyn's collaborated to create the *Big Blue Book Club*. When State Librarian Dr. Kevin Starr

announced the partnership at the State Library breakfast at the annual California Library Association Conference in November 2002, library professionals knew right away that the program would both promote public libraries and get kids reading.

The planning team included: Alicia Bell (children's librarian, Belvedere-Tiburon Public Library), Francisca Goldsmith (teen librarian, Berkeley Public Library), Martha Arroyo-Neves (adult reference supervisor, Mission Branch, San Francisco Public Library), Susan Negreen (executive director, California Library Association), Bernard Boudreaux (Mervyn's Community Relations Department), Wendy Fuakamaki (Mervyn's Community Relations Department), and Bessie Condos Tichauer (children and youth services consultant, California State Library).

Mervyn's mailed an explanatory package (which included *Passport* posters) to California's public libraries in January. If you would like more fliers or posters, please contact Tracy Higgins at (510) 727-5676 or email her at TracyL.Higgins@Target.com.

For general information about Mervyn's *Big Blue Book Club* please contact Bessie Condos Tichauer, the California State Library's children and youth services consultant, at (916) 653-8293 or email btichauer@library.ca.gov.



from page 1 **Libris DESIGN**

The software program will help remind library planners to provide accessible lockers if staff lockers are available; to position the book return slot at the right height to meet the front and side reach requirements of an individual in a wheelchair; to include accessible data jacks and electrical outlets if network access is available to the public for laptop use; to purchase portable assistive listening devices for use in smaller meeting rooms; to provide companion seating adjacent to accessible seat locations in all meeting and program spaces; and to increase the lighting in the large print collection area.

The Libris DESIGN website also features a General Requirements section, which includes articles on library planning topics. These articles, written by professionals

in the field, provide a general overview, glossary, illustrations of basic principles, and further sources of information on a variety of topics. Later this spring, an expert module dedicated to universal design, which will include a compilation of disabled access requirements, will be posted to the website.

Training in the use of the software is available through the Infopeople Project at <http://www.infopeople.org>. For further information about Libris DESIGN, contact Linda Demmers at (323) 668-0404 (phone), or xlibris@earthlink.net (email); or Rushton Brandis, technology consultant, CSL, at (916) 653-5471 (phone) or rbrandis@library.ca.gov (email).

LSTA videoconference workshops reach out and touch rural library communities

By Carla Lehn

*Literacy Consultant, Library Development Services Bureau
California State Library*

Librarians in Nevada, Ventura, Mono, Imperial, Mendocino, and Fresno counties tuned in on September 13 and September 23, 2002 to watch the latest library instructional thriller: "How to Be Successful in the LSTA Grants Process." The broadcasts, part of the California State Library's "Rural Initiative" program, demystified applying for, receiving, and fulfilling the reporting requirements for Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants, a federal grant program for libraries. The workshops provided tips and strategies for submitting a successful grant application. They also showcased two rural libraries that received LSTA grants.

SBC Communications, Inc. allowed the California State Library (CSL) to use SBC's Sacramento center to broadcast the free workshop to eight remote videoconference locations throughout California. Forty-one people participated in the workshops via videoconference, while another 55 viewed the live webcast on their desktop computers.

Listening to Rural Libraries

The Rural Initiative's planners designed the workshops around rural library staff concerns, the primary of which was that rural libraries' LSTA proposals and/or applications are not as competitive as those from larger urban libraries. The rural library staff members perceived that because larger libraries could afford to hire professional grant writers whereas rural libraries could not, rural libraries' projects couldn't compete for "statewide significance."

CSL staff knew about the rural library staffs' frustration. They knew that even though LSTA dollars had flowed to rural libraries, those dollars had historically "targeted" established grant programs such as Youth Services Materials and Spanish Language Materials. Few small or rural libraries had ever sought LSTA funding for new rural library projects individually developed by a rural library.

Rural library staff had also articulated another rural library roadblock to workshops and training: physical isolation. Many rural library staff can't get to training workshops because of the distance, terrain, and weather. Further, rural libraries have to close the library's doors so staff can travel to distant workshops.

To solve these problems, CSL staff delivered the workshop via videoconference and webcast technology. It was a terrific success.

After viewing the workshop, participants' knowledge of how to apply for LSTA grants improved dramatically. Many said that they intend to apply for LSTA funding within the next two funding cycles. In fact, four libraries that had never participated in the LSTA process submitted proposals by the November 15, 2002 deadline for 2003/04 funding.

Workshop evaluations showed that participants appreciated that the CSL was offering the workshop via technologies that did not require them to travel great distances.

Here's what two participants said: "I never did a videoconference before -- I found it surprisingly personal and present." And "I think this is an excellent format. It allows for accessibility without driving great distances."

The webcast has been archived on the web and library staff around the state are still watching it. I recently talked to someone who, because of the archived webcast, is planning to submit a proposal for LSTA funding in a future grant cycle. The caller complimented the workshop saying, "I missed it live, but the archive gave me the information I needed to move ahead with my proposal idea."

Webcasts Save Money

Remote access technologies are also a bargain. During the 2001-2002 Rural Initiative, 13 videoconferences and nine webcasts were presented. Sixty-two remote sites around California hosted the videoconferences, 558 people participated in them, and another 353 watched the live webcast. Including on-going visits to archived presentations, over 1000 rural library staff participated in or watched these training workshops using these remote access technologies in just one year! Dividing the cost of producing, delivering, and archiving these programs by the conservative estimate of 1,000 participants, the approximate training cost per participant is about \$100. This is truly a bargain in light of considering the following alternatives:



Libraries are using interactive videoconferencing for recruiting, staff development and video author visits.

Please see LSTA videoconference workshops, page 4

from page 3

LSTA videoconferencing workshops

- **Alternative #1:** 1000 geographically remote library staff and volunteers *not* participating because of travel time, costs, and having to close a library to participate in the training workshop. More importantly, when library staffs from isolated libraries do not receive information that could help them provide additional services or greater resources to their individual communities, there is a significant cost to their patrons;
- **Alternative #2:** When those 1000 geographically remote library staff travel several hours to a large population center to attend a workshop, local communities pay a significant cost: paying substitute librarians or staff (or closing libraries when substitute pay is not an option) and travel costs (often including hotels and meals, as well as workshop fees, since vast travel distances, terrain and weather barriers impact many isolated communities even to attend only a two-hour meeting);
- **Alternative #3:** Besides the high travel costs for rural library staff attending sessions in large metropolitan centers, time costs occur as well because of traffic congestion in most metropolitan areas. Even if the population centers chosen are spread throughout the state -- such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, San Diego, and Redding, for example -- MANY geographically isolated libraries still could not attend. For example, travel from Del Norte or Modoc counties to Redding can easily consume four to five hours driving time each way. If the training session is held between October and April, snow can substantially lengthen such a trip or make it physically impossible to drive.

The Rural Initiative is funded by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of LSTA, administered in California by the State Librarian. For general information about the Rural Initiative, consult earlier issues of *Connection*, or contact Carla Lehn at (916) 653-7743 (phone) or by email to clehn@library.ca.gov. Questions about the LSTA process should be referred to Jay Cunningham, LSTA program coordinator, CSL, at (916) 653-8112 (phone) or jcunningham@library.ca.gov (email); or to Tom Andersen, assistant bureau chief of Library Development Services bureau, CSL, at (916) 653-7391 (phone), or tandersen@library.ca.gov (email).



Library cards for foster children

State Director of Social Services Rita L. Saenz and State Librarian Dr. Kevin Starr have commended the Los Angeles County Public Library for initiating a new program that helps foster children obtain library cards. In their commendatory remarks, Director Saenz and Dr. Starr stated that "for many of California's foster children, getting a library card has been all but impossible. No child, especially children without families of their own or children profoundly affected by family dislocation, should be denied full use of our public libraries."

The program, launched by the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services in partnership with the County Library, began in October 2002. So far about 60 foster children are signed up, and the number is expected to grow as word of the program spreads.

A major barrier to foster children obtaining library cards has been the reluctance of foster parents to assume financial responsibility for children under their care on a temporary basis. Under Los Angeles County's new pilot program, foster parents are not liable for library fines or other charges incurred by their foster children.

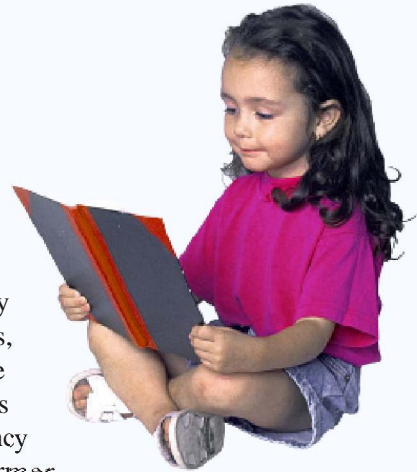
Penny Markey, youth services coordinator for the County Library, noted that another challenge to developing the program was the law protecting confidentiality of records pertaining to foster children. With careful planning, Markey said, rules protecting foster children from being identified as such are not compromised under the new program. Markey added that the program required the addition of a new borrower class to the library's automated system.

The program grew out of an idea presented by Ernestine Fields, an attorney in the Los Angeles County Dependency Court and former elementary teacher in Los Angeles schools, who was instrumental in program organization. Fields is the founder and president of Comfort for Court Kids, a publicly supported charity that provides emotional support for children passing through the court system which includes providing teddy bears to the children.

"We don't know if this has been done anywhere else," Markey said. "We have to be very, very careful to protect each child's confidentiality and to build trust with foster parents."

Los Angeles county librarian Margaret Todd stated that "libraries are important resources in support of children's reading and educational achievement. The County Library is pleased to collaborate with Children and Family Services to reach more children and expand their access to library materials."

Director Saenz and Dr. Starr expressed their appreciation and admiration to Todd, her staff, and to Children and Family Services for their hard work and creativity in implementing the innovative program. "As State Librarian, I hope that other California public libraries will follow Los Angeles County's lead in addressing the needs of foster children," Starr stated.



APPOINTMENT

Gary Strong appointed as UCLA's university librarian

Former California State Librarian, Gary E. Strong has been appointed as UCLA's university librarian effective Sept. 1, Chancellor Albert Carnesale of UCLA announced.

Since 1994, Strong has been head of the busiest public library in America, the Queens

Borough Public Library in New York, serving the most diverse county in the nation with a central library, 62 community libraries and six adult learning centers. Prior to joining the Queens Borough Public Library, he worked closely with the UC libraries during his 14 years as the California State Librarian.

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Getting the Most From Microsoft Word*

Date and location:

Tuesday, April 15, Central Santa Rosa Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/24>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Census 2000 Introduction*

Dates and locations:

Monday, April 14, Pleasant Hill, Contra Costa County Library

Thursday, May 1, Cerritos Public Library

Friday, May 2, Los Angeles Public Library

Monday, May 5, San Francisco Public Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/130>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Developing Spanish and Latino Interest Collections
Using the Web and Online Sources*

Dates and locations:

Wednesday, April 16, San Jose Public Library

Thursday, May 1, Ventura County Library

Thursday, May 15, California State Library

Friday, May 23, Cerritos Public Library

Thursday, June 12, San Diego Public Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/109>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Introduction to Metadata and Record-building*

Date and location:

Tuesday, May 6, Cerritos Public Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/129>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Training the Tech Trainer*

Dates and locations:

Tuesday, April 22, Contra Costa County Library - Pleasant Hill

Wednesday, May 7, San Diego Public Library

Tuesday, May 20, Fresno County Public Library

<http://www.infopeople.dreamhost.com/WS/workshop/Workshop/115>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Raising Private Dollars for Public Libraries*

Date and location:

Monday, April 28, Sutter County Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/122>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Training the Trainer 2003*

Date and location:

Thursday, May 29, Fresno County Public Library (Lab)

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/120>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Distance Learning Course: *Library Laws for the Web Environment*

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/86>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Distance Learning Course:

*Everything You've Always Wanted to Know About
Grant Writing But Didn't Know How to Ask*

Dates:

Now through Tuesday, April 22, 2003

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/128>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Delivering Effective Library Presentations!*

Dates and locations:

Friday, April 11, Mountain View Public Library

Thursday, April 24, Fresno County Public Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/126>

Provider: **Infopeople**

Course: *Genealogy Resources on the Internet*

Dates and locations:

Monday, April 21, San Diego Public Library

Thursday, May 8, Fresno County Public Library

Thursday, May 22, Los Angeles Public Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/107>

Provider: **Infopeople**

presents Gary Price teaching ...

Course: *There's More to Web Research than Google!*

Dates and locations:

Thursday, April 10, Fresno County Public Library

Friday, April 11, Los Angeles Public Library

<http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop/Workshop/102>



If you would like your library-related training event included in *Connection*, please send event information to Sarah Dalton, *Connection* editor at sdalton@library.ca.gov

2003

April

April 6-12, 2003

National Library Week

April 10-13, 2003

Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL),
11th National Conference, Charlotte, North Carolina

May

May 2-7, 2003

Medical Library Association (MLA) Annual Conference, San Diego

June

June 7-12, 2003

Special Libraries Association (SLA) Annual Conference, New York City

June 19-25, 2003

American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference, Toronto, Canada

July

July 12-16, 2003

American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), Annual Conference, Seattle

Fall

Fall, 2003

Library of California board meeting, location to be determined

October

October 22-26, 2003

American Association of School Librarians (AASL)
National Conference, Kansas City, Missouri

November

November 15-17, 2003

California Library Association (CLA) Annual Conference, Ontario

2004

January

January 9-14, 2004

American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Meeting, San Diego

CONNECTION

is the website newsletter of the
California State Library
and the Library of California.

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President

Articles for inclusion in a
future issue of the
Connection are welcomed.
Please submit articles or
suggestions to the *Connection*
editor, Sarah Dalton.



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